

INCH-POUND

A-A-20173B

December 27, 2001

SUPERSEDING

A-A-20173A

April 4, 1994

COMMERCIAL ITEM DESCRIPTION

LETTUCE, READY-TO-USE, FRESH

**The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has
authorized the use of this Commercial Item Description.**

1. SCOPE. This Commercial Item Description (CID) covers fresh ready-to-use lettuce, packed in commercially acceptable containers, suitable for use by the Federal, State, local governments, and other interested parties.

2. PURCHASER NOTES.

2.1 Purchasers *shall specify* the following:

- Type(s), style(s), and shred thickness(es) required (Sec. 3).
- When salient characteristics need to be verified (Sec. 6).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 9.2) or USDA certification (Sec. 9.3).

2.2 Purchasers *may specify* the following:

- Manufacturer's quality assurance (Sec. 9.1 with 9.1.1), (Sec. 9.1 with 9.1.2) or (Sec. 9.1 with 9.1.3).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial (Sec. 10).

3. CLASSIFICATION. The fresh ready-to-use lettuce shall conform to the following list which shall be specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

Types, styles, and thicknesses.

Type I - Iceberg

Style A - Whole head, trimmed

Style B - Whole head, cored

Style C - Chopped, coarse (1" to 3" [2.54 cm to 7.62 cm] pieces)

Style D - Chopped, medium (1/4" to 1" [0.635 cm to 2.54 cm] pieces)

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Style E - Shredded

Thickness 1 - 1/16 inch (0.159 cm)

Thickness 2 - 1/8 inch (0.318 cm)

Thickness 3 - 3/16 inch (0.476 cm)

Thickness 4 - 1/4 inch (0.635 cm)

Thickness 5 - Other

Style F - Whole leaf lettuce (single lettuce leaves)

Style G - Other

Type II - Romaine

Style A - Whole head, trimmed

Style C - Chopped, coarse

Style F - Whole leaf lettuce

Style G - Other

Type III - Romaine hearts

Style A - Whole head, trimmed

Style F - Whole leaf lettuce

Style G - Other

Type IV - Red Leaf

Type V - Green Leaf

Style A - Whole head, trimmed

Style F - Whole leaf lettuce

Style G - Other

Type VI - Butter Leaf (Boston)

Style A - Whole head, trimmed

Style G - Other

4. MANUFACTURER'S/DISTRIBUTOR'S NOTES. Manufacturer's/distributor's products *shall meet* the requirements of the:

- Salient characteristics (Sec. 5).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's product assurance (Sec. 7).
- Regulatory requirements (Sec. 8).
- Quality assurance provisions: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 9).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 10).

5. SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS.

5.1 Processing. The fresh shredded lettuce shall be processed in accordance with good manufacturing practice (21 CFR Part 110).

5.2 Lettuce. The iceberg, leaf, and romaine lettuce shall not exceed the maximum allowable percent of defects defined in the F.O.B. Good Delivery Standards (7 CFR § 46.44).

5.3 Preparation. The lettuce heads shall be properly trimmed to remove wrapper leaves for Style A. The core shall be removed for Style B. For Styles C, D, and E, the lettuce should be properly trimmed to remove wrapper leaves and the core shall be removed. The shredded lettuce shall be uniformly cut (sliced) to yield shreds of the thickness specified.

5.4 Food additives. The lettuce intended for the fresh state shall meet the requirements specified in 21 CFR § 101.95 (a) and (c).

5.5 Finished product.

5.5.1 Thickness. The lettuce shreds shall be uniform in thickness and the appearance shall not be more than slightly affected by the presence of short or irregular cut pieces.

5.5.2 Texture and flavor. The lettuce shall be fresh and crisp, not flabby or tough. The lettuce shall not be bitter in flavor.

5.5.3 Color and odor. The iceberg lettuce shall have a light green color. The romaine shall be medium to dark green in color. The romaine hearts shall be medium to pale green in color. The red leaf lettuce shall be tipped with a medium to dark-red color and the remaining leaves shall be medium to dark-green. The green leaf lettuce shall be medium to dark-green in color. The butter leaf lettuce shall have an even green color. The lettuce shreds shall be whitish green to green in color. The lettuce shall be free from off odors such as, but not limited to; chlorine, ammonia, musty/moldy, sour, and fermented smells and other odors not typical of fresh lettuce.

5.5.4 Temperature. The fresh ready-to-use lettuce shall be kept under refrigeration to maintain quality. Unless otherwise specified, temperatures greater than 32°F (0°C) but not more than 40°F (4.4°C) are recommended.

5.5.5 Defects. The fresh ready-to-use chopped and shredded lettuce shall be practically free of large pieces, core pieces, and discolored shreds or pieces including tipburn. Presence of foreign material or adhering dirt, sand, or soil on the lettuce shreds and pieces shall be cause for rejection. Major defects are decay and discolored shreds or pieces including tipburn. The areas of discolored pieces should not

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exceed 1/4" square inch (1/2" x 1/2") (1.61 square cm, 1.27 cm x 1.27 cm) per 12 ounces net weight of product. Minor defects are large pieces of leaves and large pieces of core material. Major defects may be present that do not more than slightly affect the appearance or eating quality of the product. Minor defects may be present that do not materially affect the appearance or eating quality of the product.

6. PRODUCT VERIFICATION. When USDA verification of salient characteristics is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order the USDA inspection service will select the number of product containers based on USDA inspection service sampling procedures and plans.

7. MANUFACTURER'S/DISTRIBUTOR'S PRODUCT ASSURANCE. The manufacturer/distributor shall certify that the fresh shredded ready-to-use lettuce provided shall meet the salient characteristics of this CID, conform to their own specifications, standards, and quality assurance practices, and be the same fresh, shredded ready-to-use lettuce offered for sale in the commercial market. The purchaser reserves the right to require proof of conformance.

8. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS. The delivered fresh shredded ready-to-use lettuce shall comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local mandatory requirements and regulations relating to the preparation, packaging, labeling, storage, distribution, and sale of fresh shredded ready-to-use lettuce within the commercial marketplace. Delivered fresh shredded ready-to-use lettuce shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act, the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act, and regulations promulgated thereunder.

9. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS. *Purchaser shall specify 9.2 or 9.3; purchaser may specify 9.1 with 9.1.1, 9.1 with 9.1.2, or 9.1 with 9.1.3.*

9.1 Manufacturer's quality assurance. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the product manufacturer shall be required to provide evidence, by certificate, that the manufacturing plant has undertaken one of the following quality assurance measures within 12 months prior to providing a bid, or no later than 10 business days from the date of awarding of the contract. Failure to provide this documentation within the proper time frame may result in the contract being terminated for cause.

9.1.1 Plant systems audit. A plant systems audit (PSA) conducted by USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), or another audit performed by a third party auditing service is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. *(An AMS PSA verifies the manufacturer's capability to produce products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with Title 21 Code of Federal Regulations Part 110 - Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food; and verifies that the manufacturer has in place an internal quality assurance program. The AMS PSA determines the manufacturer's*

ability to produce under this CID, if the products of interest are identified at the time of the PSA.)

9.1.2 Plant survey. A plant survey conducted by USDA, AMS, or another survey performed by a third party auditing service is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. *(An AMS plant survey audit verifies that, at the time of the survey, the manufacturer produces products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with Title 21 Code of Federal Regulations Part 110 - Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food.)*

9.1.3 Qualified Through Verification (QTV) Audit. A QTV audit conducted by USDA, AMS, or another Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan verification audit performed by a third party auditing service is required within 12 months prior to the date of awarding of the contract. *(An AMS QTV audit verifies, at the time of the audit, the manufacturer produces products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with Title 21 Code of Federal regulations Part 110 – Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding of Human Food.)*

9.2 Manufacturer's/distributor's certification. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the manufacturer/distributor will certify that the finished fresh shredded ready-to-use lettuce distributed meets or exceeds the requirements of this CID.

9.3 USDA certification. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order that product quality and acceptability or both be determined, the Fresh Products Branch (FPB), Fruit and Vegetable Programs (FVP), AMS, USDA, shall be the certifying program. FPB inspectors shall certify the quality and acceptability of the fresh shredded ready-to-use lettuce in accordance with FPB procedures which include selecting random samples of the packaged fresh shredded ready-to-use lettuce, evaluating the samples for conformance with the salient characteristics of this CID and other contractual requirements, and documenting the findings on official FPB score sheets and/or certificates. In addition, when required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, FPB inspectors will examine the fresh shredded ready-to-use lettuce for conformance to the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers in effect on the date of the solicitation.

10. PACKAGING. Preservation, packaging, packing, labeling, and case marking shall be commercial unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

11. USDA INSPECTION NOTES. When Section 9.3 is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA certification shall include evaluation of the quality and condition of samples of packaged fresh shredded ready-to-use lettuce, and compliance with requirements in the following areas:

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- Salient characteristics (Sec. 5).
- Packaging requirements (Sec. 10 or as specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order).

12. REFERENCE NOTES.

12.1 USDA contacts.

12.1.1 USDA certification contact. For USDA certification, contact the **Branch Chief, FPB, FVP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0240, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0240** telephone (202) 720-5870, Fax (202) 720-0393, or via E-mail: **leanne.skilton@usda.gov.**

12.1.2 USDA QTV contact. For a USDA QTV audit, contact the **Branch Chief, Processed Products Branch (PPB), FVP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0247, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0247** telephone (202) 720-4693, Fax (202) 690-1527, or via E-mail: **james.rodeheaver@usda.gov.**

12.2 Sources of documents.

12.2.2 Sources of information for governmental documents are as follows:

Applicable provisions of the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act Regulations are contained in 7 CFR Part 46. The Fair Packaging Act is contained in 16 CFR Parts 500-503. The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act is contained in 21 CFR Parts 1 to 199. These documents may be purchased from: **Superintendent of Documents, ATTN: New Orders, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. Credit card (MasterCard or Visa) purchases may be made by calling the Superintendent of Documents (202) 512-1800 or on the Internet at: www.access.gpo.gov/nara.**

The F.O.B. Good Delivery Standards table may be found on the Internet at: **http://www.ams.usda.gov/fvpaca/fobgood.htm.**

Copies of this CID and the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers, and beneficial comments, recommendations, additions, deletions, clarifications, etc. and any data which may improve this CID are available from and/or provided to: **Head, Food Quality Assurance Staff, FVP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0243, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-0243, telephone (202) 720-9939, Fax (202) 690-0102, via E-mail: FQASTaff@usda.gov or on the Internet at: http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/fvqual.htm.**

Military activities should submit requests for copies of this CID to: **Standardization Documents Order Desk, Document Automation and Production Service, 700 Robbins Avenue, Building 4D, Philadelphia, PA 19111-5094.**

MILITARY INTERESTS:

Military Coordinating Activity

Army - GL

Custodians

Army - GL

Navy - SA

Air Force - 35

Review Activities

Army - MD, QM

Navy - MC

DLA - SS

CIVIL AGENCY COORDINATING ACTIVITIES:

DOJ - BOP

HHS - NIH, HIS

USDA - FV

VA - OSS

PREPARING ACTIVITY:

USDA - FV

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